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Curriculum design in the urban arts classroom; can the Common Core Standards be the great equalizer for arts education? : a research paper and studio art unit study

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Curriculum Design in the Urban Arts Classroom;
Can the Common Core Standards be the Great Equalizer for Arts
Education?

A Research Paper and Studio Art Unit Study

By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to present a case for developing Common Core Standards for the Arts as an avenue to increase universal access to quality arts education regardless of a student's geographic or socioeconomic background. This research project includes an overview of where arts education stands nationwide, in New York City and at my individual school. The research also includes an introduction to the Common Core standards and their current implementation status nationwide, and a rationale for the necessity of quality arts education. In summation there is an in-depth analysis of a Unit I created and implemented in my school utilizing the Common Core College and Career Readiness standards in English Language Arts. The Unit I developed looks in-depth at a 12th grade Studio Art Unit illustrating the way in which the Common Core standards could positively impact quality arts education. This research is not meant to encourage the standardization of the arts experience for students but instead to bring attention to the necessity for quality arts education nationwide.

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION	
School Community.....	5
Where the arts stand.....	7
Educational reform.....	9
II. THE COMMON CORE	
History.....	10
College and Career Readiness.....	11
III. RATIONALE	
Inquiry Based Learning.....	14
21 st Century Skill.....	15
Teaching with the Brain in Mind.....	17
IV. UNIT GOALS	
Class demographics.....	22
Lesson Sequence	22
Sample Lessons.....	31
Student Work.....	37
In the Field.....	46
Final Works of Art.....	54
V. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS	
What now?	58
VI. APPENDICES	
Additional Materials and Worksheets.....	61
References.....	67
Permissions: Approval Letter, Consent Letter.....	70

INTRODUCTION

School Community

In September of 2006 I entered the lobby of a small public 6-12 grade school in the central Bronx as a first year New York City Teaching Fellow in Special Education. As I walked through the metal detectors and wandered down the sterile hall of the school to the main office I was struck by the lack of color and student work in the hallways. As a lifetime lover of learning and the arts school had always meant for me vibrancy and learning that you not only could talk about but see evidence of throughout the school. As my first year of teaching went along I became aware of the lack of arts programming available to our students. Not only was there only one certified art teacher at the school, students had absolutely no electives. Instead they had double periods of Math and English as well as an advisory course that had no curriculum or purpose. I was shocked. I knew entering as a NYC Teaching Fellow in a hard to staff area in a high need region of the Bronx that the environment would be challenging, but it seemed to me that if students were struggling academically the school should try to reach the students in a non-traditional way. The majority of the classes that I saw were taught with PowerPoints and text books with the teacher talking in the front of the room, especially in the High School classrooms where students were struggling to pass high stakes Regents exams. During the 2006-2007 school year only 33% of the students who took the English Regents passed with a 65 or higher (School Reportcard," 2009).

My inclinations toward non-traditional teaching perhaps came to me as a student who learned best through the arts. Throughout my own time in high school

the most powerful learning experiences I had were in the arts. For example, putting on a production of the musical *Fame* from start to finish made all other aspects of my education from English to Math feel worthwhile. Arts became for me the intersection of all subject areas. Why had there not been any initiative started at our school to utilize the arts to meet the needs of all learners? In addition to struggling learners, our teachers were struggling as well. During my first year our school had an incredibly high teacher turnover rate. According to our New York City School Report Card in 2006-2007 we had a 31% turnover rate among a staff of only 36 teachers. In addition 39% of the teachers had been teaching for less than three years ("School Report Card," 2009). We were all just trying to survive our first years of teaching in a new small school in the Bronx. One of the many challenges facing our school was that the small schools movement in New York City, aimed at personalizing education for public school students by breaking down large comprehensive high schools into smaller schools was still in its early stages of implementation. "Teacher turnover, a long plague of urban high schools, is even higher in the small schools, the system overall...Several new schools lost nearly half their teachers in a one-year period. (Hemphill and Nauer, 2009).

Despite the stressors of our new school, another first year teacher and myself with a common love for arts decided to start an afterschool theater program. At the time there were no after school programs available for our high school students except for tutoring. Our initial turnout was incredible. We had close to thirty students come out for our first meeting. At the end of the year the students put on our first production in the school library. That night we had more parents come to

see the performance than we had at parent teacher conferences. In *Engaging Classrooms and Communities Through the Arts* (2009) Beth Krensky and Seana Lowe Stephen explore the long history of the arts as an effective tool for altering communities and classrooms. The power of art to transform communities is evident in a multitude of ways:

“As reflections of living culture, works of art possess symbolic significance as well as transformative power for both individual and communities. Art has the unique capacity to catalyze transformation because it inspires openings for creative possibilities on individual and societal levels as it satisfies fundamental human needs. (Krensky & Stephen, 2009, p. 7)

Some of our students who struggled the most in our classrooms, students who had been in trouble with the law, quiet students, all of them shined in our production that day. After that first show, I could see the power and success of the arts in our community and became committed to building an arts program at our school. But in the NYC Department of Education system, serving 1.1 million students, where does access to the arts fall in the list of priorities? (“NYCDOE: About Us,” 2013)

Where the Arts Stand

The inequity of arts education based on a students socio- economic status and/or race is startling. *Americans for the Arts* highlights this discrepancy by pointing out, “Access to arts education for African Americans and Hispanics is significantly lower than for their White peers, and has been steadily declining for three decades” (“Arts Education Childhood,” 2013). This inequity is especially important to know when one takes into account the variety of research that has been done which supports the case for art in schools especially in communities with

an increased likelihood for students dropping out. In a report put out by the Center for Arts Education, *Staying in School; Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates* (2009) Douglas Israel calls attention to the necessity for Arts education especially in a city like New York which faces a starting epidemic in low graduation rates, "New York City public school students at schools with the lowest graduation rates have the least access to instruction in the arts."

In an effort to remedy the lack of regular arts programming available, New York State has regulations that require that middle and high school students complete at least one full unit of study (two courses/credits) in the arts (Israel, 2009). Despite these efforts only 29 percent of middle school students met the state arts requirement in 2006-2007. Less than half of the schools met the requirements in 2007-2008 of students in public schools in New York City having arts programming built into their daily schedule (Israel, 2009). In my own school we have only this year hired a full time art teacher and music teacher. For the first time in our school's short history each student is getting a full period of art or music instruction everyday in classrooms dedicated exclusively for the arts. How can schools maintain funding for these programs unless public policy makers and school community members see the value of the programming, especially in engaging students who are the most likely to drop out?

Educational Reform

Just when they need it most, the classroom tasks and tools that could best reach and inspire these students - art, music, movement and performing – are less available to them. Sadly, this is especially true for students from lower income schools, where analyses show that access to the arts in schools is disproportionately absent.
(Dwyer, 2009)

Nationwide we are facing a crisis in public education and my school serves as a microcosm of the problems facing public schools nationwide such as; funding, space, teacher retention, poverty, etc. A variety of reforms to address this crisis are being tried out from charter schools, to small public schools like my own, changing leadership, and hiring from outside the education arena. A recent article in the *New York Times* (2013) followed a school in Union City New Jersey and argued that current educational reforms are not where the effort should be placed but instead that educational leaders need to revamp what is already in place. The Union City School district spent almost 25 years reworking the education in their district, there was no overnight solution. There are many cases that demonstrate solutions to issues facing public schools, but only time will tell if measures are successful and sustainable for student learning. While there doesn't appear to be one clear answer on how to improve *all* public schools, the recent commitment by 46 states in the country to implement of the Common Core State standards begins to light the path on remedies to address the country's issues of inequity in public education ("Common Core," 2013). The introduction of Common Core Standards for the Arts classroom would reestablish the necessity for quality arts education nationwide no matter what the socioeconomic status of the students.

THE COMMON CORE

Context

The Common Core State standards were officially implemented in an effort to create nationwide standards in education that will remain constant from state to state, at the time of this research forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories and the Department of Defense have adopted the Common Core States Standards ("Common Core" 2013). At present there are Common Core Standards for grades K-12 in Mathematics and English Language Arts as well as standards for Technical subjects including; Science and Social Studies. The Common Core standards were developed to ensure that students state to state are being offered the same quality of educational content in the classroom.

Currently there are no Common Core standards for the arts. Is there a place for the Common Core Standards in the Arts classroom? If so, what does it look like and how can it be implemented? Much of the focus on the implementation of the Common Core has been focused on Math and English Language Arts. I would argue that equal attention needs to be paid to arts education, particularly because of the close correlation between improvements in English Language Arts and Math scores when there is consistent arts programming (Israel, 2009). If national education policy experts are truly interested in improving student achievement, students not only need to be given equally strong curriculum in English, Math, Social Studies and Science but in the Arts as well. In order to truly be College and Career ready in the 21st century students need to be given equally strong opportunities to think creatively and cooperatively, skills that are inherent in a quality Arts classroom.

College and Career Readiness

Since there are currently no Common Core Standards for the Arts, I developed the following unit focusing on the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Social Studies. I wanted the students to use their skills of citing evidence as they would in their Social Studies or English class but to apply it in the context of the Arts classroom. In addition, the unit was heavily focused on successful implementation of the English Language Arts College and Career Readiness Standards. This being the first year that our school had a year long course dedicated to the visual arts I was excited to have the forum to integrate the students knowledge of history into the arts classroom. Previous to this year I spent the four years co-teaching Global History courses. At the beginning of this unit I knew what the students had been taught and planned the unit to build upon their previous knowledge. I felt it particularly important to focus on the College and Career Readiness standards because the unit was designed for our twelfth grade Studio Art class. In addition I decided to focus on the English Language Arts Common Core Standard that highlights the importance of using evidence in student writing. I wondered what using evidence would look like in an Arts classroom? How could I teach students to use visual evidence gained through observation in order to enhance their art making process?

In the summer of 2011 I was awarded a grant through the Fund For Teachers program to study the history of Art in France for two weeks. My primary goal in my summer exploration was to develop a unit that demonstrated how careful observations of art and architecture created in a particular time period provided a

unique and relevant understanding of that historical period. I focused specifically on investigating the historical sites and works of art from the French Revolution and sites integral to the Industrial Revolution. I was also fortunate to take my study to another level by taking a class with an atelier that provided an experiential learning opportunity to tie together all parts of my summer investigation through an outdoor painting and drawing workshop throughout France. Ultimately my summer exploration provided the impetus for the direction of my research.

As I began planning the implementation of this unit I realized that my first task was to establish what the College and Career Readiness Standards would look like in this particular unit in our visual arts classroom. The College and Career Readiness Standards are as follows (“Common Core: English Language Arts,” 2013):

- They demonstrate independence.
- They build strong content knowledge.
- They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- They comprehend as well as critique.
- They value evidence.
- They use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.

This unit provides evidence that each and every project in the arts demands that students implement each of these characteristics into their work. Throughout my research students were asked **independently** to make thoughtful choices in their work. Student demonstrated strong **content knowledge** through their use of

appropriate *history* and *art* vocabulary both in their written work as well as in classroom discussion. Students work evolved throughout this project to **varying demands** of audience, task, purpose and discipline as this unit incorporated a variety of skills and tasks ranging from art making to discussion and written responses. Students were asked to demonstrate both historical and artistic **comprehension** of material in their completed pieces as well as formative assessments throughout the unit. Not only did students informally **critique** and discuss one another's work they developed in-depth critique skills when analyzing art and architecture of France. Regularly throughout this process students were asked to describe the ways in which they decided to make the choices that they did in their artwork, using **evidence** from their observations to defend their reasoning for using particular materials or techniques to illustrate an idea they were trying to communicate. While the students' work was always displayed in our classroom, students used **technology** throughout the project to document and develop their work.

In the initial stages of our project students used digital cameras and phone cameras to collect visual references for creating their art pieces. As a part of the students' summative assessment, they were required to upload all of their artworks to the photo sharing website Flickr as a part of their online art portfolio. As our students will soon be graduating from high school, I wanted them to be able to take all of their achievements in the Art studio with them beyond our school. The driving force behind the development of this unit was for students to be able to draw

authentic parallels between their own **perspectives and culture** and that of other cultures.

RATIONALE

Inquiry Based Learning

How do notions of inquiry based learning fit into the Common Core? In my research I have used the understanding of inquiry as described in *Teaching and Learning Through Inquiry in the Content Areas*, “Inquiry is any activity aimed at extracting meaning from experience” (Audet and Jordan, 2005, p. 6). This unit was designed upon reflection and learning from my own experiences with the aim of providing a similar experience of meaning making for my own students. Notions of inquiry are central to utilizing Project Based Learning (PBL) which informed the design of the unit that I developed. Project Based Learning defined by Thom Markham is not interested merely in students creating “projects” but instead in incorporating,

“aspects of guided inquiry; it has a strong constructivist orientation and places value on student interests. But PBL employs a sophisticated project design process based on replicable, scalable methods that incorporate key component into the project design” (Markham, 2012, p. 11)

Students are often asked in the art classroom to create an artwork, which fits within a certain set of parameters. In this unit I wanted the students to be able to generate larger connections about the world around them as well as develop their own questions for inquiry and desire to search for answers. Markham’s book outlines a set of principles to help teachers design Project Based Learning. I utilized Markham’s book to design sections of my project. Markham describes throughout his coaching guide a variety of specific characteristics that make the dramatic shift

from a “project” to a more in-depth study and investment in learning about a particular topic. This project, “Our Changing Community” asked the students to create 6-10 works that reflected juxtapositions of different subjects in their community. A few particular facets of this planning model resonated with me and were central in my planning of this unit, “**Emphasize innovation**. PBL relies on a problem-solving process that requires students to learn and use information to find the solution” (Markham, 2012, p. 27). Students were encouraged throughout their process to challenge themselves to experiment with a variety of materials and methods to try and recreate the variety of textures the class witnessed in our outdoor research. Markham also highlights the importance of quality, “During a project, provide every student with multiple opportunities to perform deep, quality work” (Markham, 2012, p. 28). Students were asked several times throughout the project to reflect upon their own process, ask questions about their work and the work of others as well as deeply engage with the process and importance of the work they were creating. Based on students’ final works of art as well as their final reflections it became clear that carefully guided reflection and encouragement to be innovative in their work pushed students beyond a traditional project.

21st Century Skills

What are 21st Century Skills and what can they look like in the Arts classroom? 21st Century Skills are closely aligned with the Common Core College and Career Readiness standards. In 21st Century Skills; Learning for Life in Our Times, Trilling and Fadel state,

“In our newly flat world of connected knowledge work, global markets, tele-linked citizens, and blended cultural traditions, the 21st century demands a

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

fresh set of responses...Achieving education's goals in our times is shaped by the increasingly powerful technologies we have for communicating, collaborating, and learning. And learning assumes a central role throughout life" (Trilling and Fadel, 2009, p. 16).

In developing this unit this idea stuck with me. While I was creating lessons around a particular topic I also wanted to engrain in my students a set of processes of understanding that they could take with them to other subject areas in order to understand material across the content areas. The authors further break down 21st Century Skills into what they describe as the 21st Century Learning Convergence: (1)Knowledge Work, (2) Thinking Tools, (3)Digital and Lifestyles, (4)Learning Research; the four facets that makeup 21st Century Learning. *Knowledge work* – focusing on the notion that different from previous centuries today's workers need to be, "well-trained workers-workers using brainpower and digital tools to apply well-honed knowledge skills to their daily work" (Trilling and Fadel , 2009, p.24).

Thinking Tools- The great accessibility of a variety of technology in order to access information and connect with others so easily is one of the greatest attributes and skills necessary to develop in the 21st Century (Trilling and Fadel, 2009 p.27).

Digital Lifestyles – Readily available and easy to access to phone, internet, or television as changed the landscape of not only the transfer of information but freedom (Trilling and Fadel, 2009, p. 29). *Learning Research* – "learning about learning" has contributed greatly to the development in important reasoning and techniques about the necessary shift in education that must occur in order to meet the needs of all learners (Trilling and Fadel, 2009, p.30). In this unit I wanted to highlight all of the points that Trilling and Fadel make clear are necessary skills for students in the 21st Century. I wanted students to be able to utilize media they are

familiar with (phone, internet cameras) in a way that melded their ideas with some of the most notable and influential artists in history, the Impressionists. Art education should meld history with the present as art is a constantly evolving field. It is an area that can allow educators to design lessons that evolve right along with the changing way that people learn.

Teaching with the Brain in Mind

A current leader in the field of learning research is Eric Jensen. In his book, *Teaching With the Brain in Mind; The Arts* Jensen expounds on the importance of using research to inform education, pointing specifically to how the brain works and its connection to the arts. Jensen describes the ways in which the arts are the only way to meet the needs of 21st Century learners in this digital age. Jensen argues that students no longer need the rote skills of copying information, being given information by their teacher because in the digital age all the answers that the students need are available right at their finger tips. Students need to be engaged in the process of how to investigate, research and find the answers to their questions (Jensen, 2001, p.8). No longer are the teachers needed to facilitate the delivery of information but now teachers need to deliver the skills and techniques for how to ask the right questions. It should be noted that as we are in the midst of the digital age, most current educators are not, “digital natives” and teaching in the way that Jensen suggests requires a pedagogical shift that many educators have not experienced. In order for students to begin to utilize technology learning, educators need to urge students to experiment and use technology in a responsible and

thoughtful way. Throughout the unit students were asked to use varied forms of technology to research their work and also record their progress.

UNIT GOALS

The design and focus of my unit was framed with the goal of creating authentic learning experiences for my students while utilizing the Common Core Standards to guide the projects' development. I was interested in developing a unit that would tie together what my students had used in their history classes as well as art class. In *Brainstorming Themes that Connect* (2006) Donovan R. Walling he discusses the notion of "Art and the Commonplace" which connected very well to the fact that the culminating project my students would be working towards was based on community around them. The questions I developed were framed around such themes, "Artistic Beauty can be found in everyday objects, whether they date from ages past or are part of daily life today. They embody culture, place, and history" (Donovan, 2006, p.22). I wanted students in this unit to be able to not only study the work of past artists but to create their own culturally relevant understanding of their own communities and create works of art that reflected their communities. The final works of art that I introduced in this unit before students created their own work was the work of the French Impressionist artists. I chose the Impressionists because while their work today is well known, their work was revolutionary for their time.

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

Unit Title	Our Changing Community – 12 th grade Studio Art
Context	<p>Students will use their prior knowledge of the history of France (specifically the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution) to unpack paintings, drawings and photographs for their historical meanings and story telling qualities. Students will then investigate how the history of France influenced the path of the Impressionist painters.</p> <p>Students will use the same methods of the Impressionist painters to go outside into their own communities and draw/paint the world around them, constructing historical meanings about their own communities.</p> <p>This unit will be introduced to support the historical investigations students will be working on in their history classes. This unit will follow a unit on color theory and will be the student's first foray into investigating color theory as it applies to the evolving world around them (versus our previous unit which was focused on creating still life drawings/paintings).</p>
Big Ideas/Themes	<p>The past is connected to the present and shapes the future.</p> <p>The past influences who we are.</p> <p>Innovations are created through the questioning of established traditions.</p> <p>The impressionists developed a variety of techniques that responded to and explored the changing world/community.</p>
Essential Questions	How do innovations change how we live? Why is art created? How does art inform?
Unit Questions	What can we learn about innovations and change from our depictions of our own community?
Content Skills Objectives	<p>Students will employ color theory in their work.</p> <p>Students will experiment with a variety of art making techniques and materials.</p> <p>Students will use careful observation to enhance their artworks.</p>
Language Skills Objectives	<p>Students will be able to articulate verbally or in writing, the influences and techniques of Impressionist painters.</p> <p>Students will be able to describe verbally or in writing the impact of Industrial Revolution and the changing urban landscape on the work of</p>

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

	<p>Impressionists in comparison to artists during eras preceding that of the Impressionists.</p> <p>Students will be able to recognize similarities in their own communities that illustrate how innovations change environments.</p>
Vocabulary	<p>Industrialization</p> <p>Revolution</p> <p>Impressionists/Impressionism</p> <p>Innovation</p> <p>Juxtapositions</p> <p>Complimentary colors</p> <p>Cross-hatching</p> <p>Texture</p> <p>Plein-Air</p> <p>Griding</p> <p><u>The Elements of Art</u></p> <p>Line</p> <p>Shape</p> <p>Direction</p> <p>Size</p> <p>Texture</p> <p>Color</p> <p>Value</p> <p><u>The Principles of Design</u></p> <p>Balance</p> <p>Proportion</p> <p>Rhythm</p> <p>Emphasis</p> <p>Unity</p>
Projects	<p>1. 6-10 completed works on cardboard canvases that will become a part of our classroom map, juxtapositions of New York City.</p>
Content Skills Formative Assessments	<p>1. Collection of photos or images demonstrating investigation of the topic.</p> <p>2. Sketches of ideas final pieces.</p>
Language Skills Formative Assessments	<p>1. Completion of daily brainstarters</p> <p>2. Completion of in class reflections</p> <p>3. Participation in classroom small and large group discussions</p>
Classroom/School Community/	<p>Students will be able to make connections between their historical studies and their own communities. Students will take advantage of</p>

Neighborhood/ Global Citizenship	<p>their community resources by visiting the local parks a short block or train ride away. Students will also be contributing to reuse of materials. Their “canvases” for their work will be a variety of different sized cardboards they have cut out themselves from cardboard that was going to be thrown away at school.</p>
Standards	<p>Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards They demonstrate independence. They build strong content knowledge. They respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose and discipline. They comprehend as well as critique. They value evidence. They use digital media strategically and capably. They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.</p> <p>Common Core English Language Arts Standards <u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2</u> Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2a</u> Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>Common Core History/Social Studies Standards <u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7</u> Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p>New York City Visual Arts Standards NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 1: Creating Art (through use of different media and techniques) NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 2: Literacy in Art (exposure to art vocabulary)</p>

Class demographics

In the New York City Department of Education as of December 2012 approximately 16% of students receive Special Education services and 14.7% are English Language Learners, which makes my school an ideal setting to closely analyze student work (“About Us: Key Facts” 2013). In our classroom of 27 students 9% are students with Individualized Education Programs and one student is an English Language Learner, a close reflection of the statistics of the citywide averages. As a Special Education teacher and an Art teacher I am interested in how the Common Core can positively affect the learning of our most struggling students. The College and Career Readiness standards overall support life skills, which, in my opinion, are the most necessary tools educators can teach students to support them as they move on to become citizens outside of the classroom, especially for students who are seniors in high school. 30% of the class are ranked in the lowest third citywide in English Language Arts and Mathematics and 100% percent of the students in the class receive free or reduced lunch. Our class represents a balance between high need students as well as students who are struggling academically. 70% of the class has had at most one to two Visual Arts class in their high school career.

Lesson Sequence

When developing the lessons for this unit I built the units using the scaffolding techniques of Bloom’s taxonomy (Forehand, 2005). The students were first be asked to recall the information and knowledge they already understood about various historical moments and to reflect on those moments through the

evaluation of visuals from the said time period. Throughout their analysis they were asked to interpret the work they were responding to. Their application of knowledge and skills came during our outdoor creation of works of art. The students analyzed their work throughout the project, revisiting ideas and altering their work as well as critiquing and discussing one another's work. Students synthesized their work as they made decisions about which pieces would be included in their final series. The conclusion of the project allowed students the space to evaluate their work and establish whether or not they had successfully achieved their goals of creating works of art that illustrated the juxtaposition of materials in their community and what such combinations said about the history of the community.

I made deliberate choices about the language I used to scaffold the templates that guided students throughout the project. I used the *Depth of Knowledge* chart (Webb, 2005) which parallels the goals of Bloom's taxonomy to highlight the level of questioning I wanted my students to engage with. Throughout the process beginning with recall questions and ending with extended thinking questions. This level of questioning is closely related to the goals of the common core specifically the strand in speaking and listening which states,

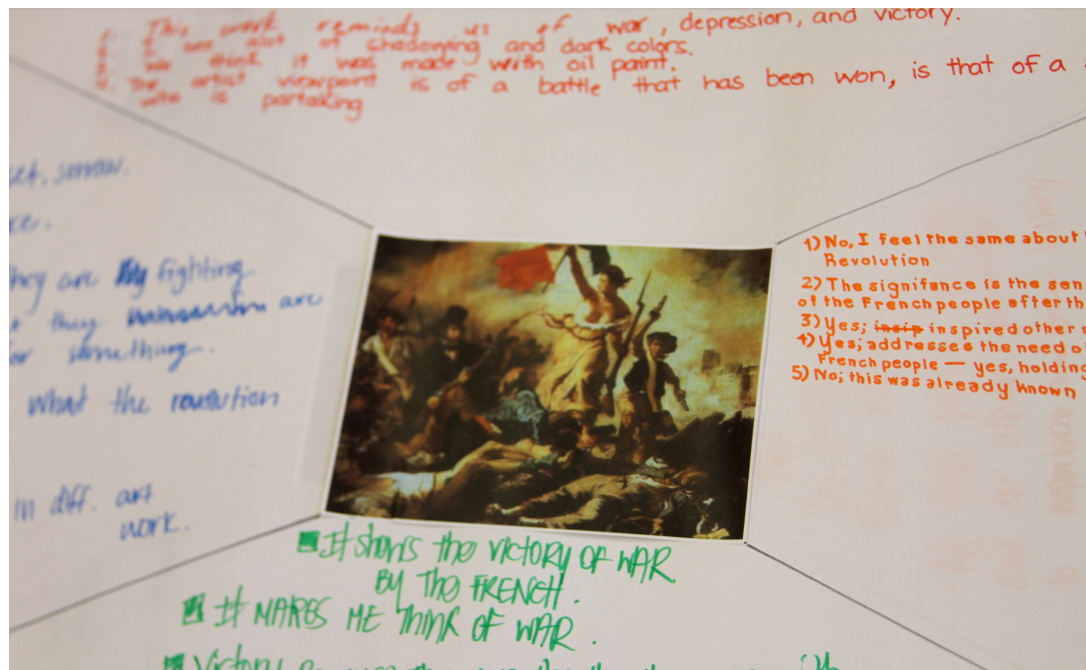
" CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks." ("Common Core,"2013)

In developing the guiding worksheets for this unit I used a consistent format that allowed for a variety of different ways for the students to record their

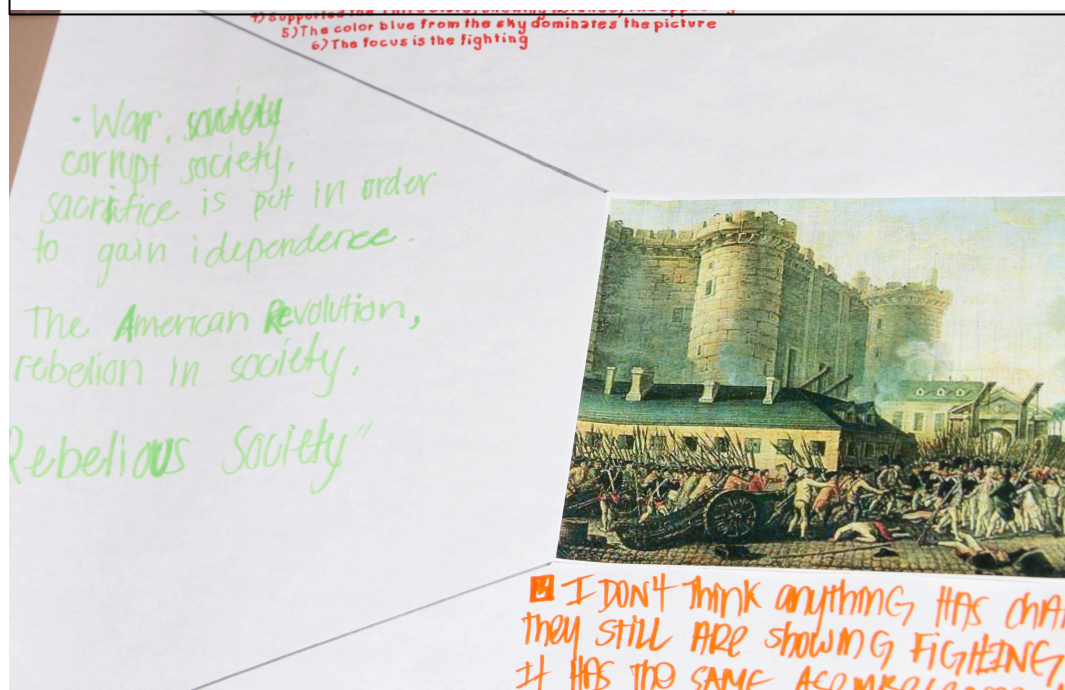
understanding of the topic. Each worksheet allows them the opportunity to draw and write in a variety of formats (*see sample worksheets in resource section*). Given the diverse group of learners in our classroom I wanted to ensure that each student felt they could contribute to each step in the process of the unit.

Day 1 – *Images of the French Revolution* - The first lesson of this unit encouraged students to refer back to their knowledge of Global History. The task allowed for multiple learners ways to communicate their understanding of past material in a format that the students would become comfortable using for the remainder of the unit. The first activity included a Brainstarter (activity to set the stage for the days lesson) where the students were asked to describe the Who, What, Why of the French Revolution, sketch an image that reminded them of the French Revolution and identify important themes of the French Revolution. The identification of themes was an important piece of the project because it helped students to identify cross-cultural connections between historical events. The activity following the Brainstarter asked students to critique art works and architecture that were created during or in remembrance of the French Revolution. Students used Crit Cards, an idea developed by Tom Anderson and outlined in the Art Education blog of Mary Kapusinisky (Kapusinisky, 2012). The Crit cards were an essential tool to help students build their observational and questioning techniques when looking at the various works of art from the French Revolution and the work of the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. The class recorded their observations on a graphic organizer poster I developed which allowed for the critiques of the various works to surround a color image of each art piece.

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

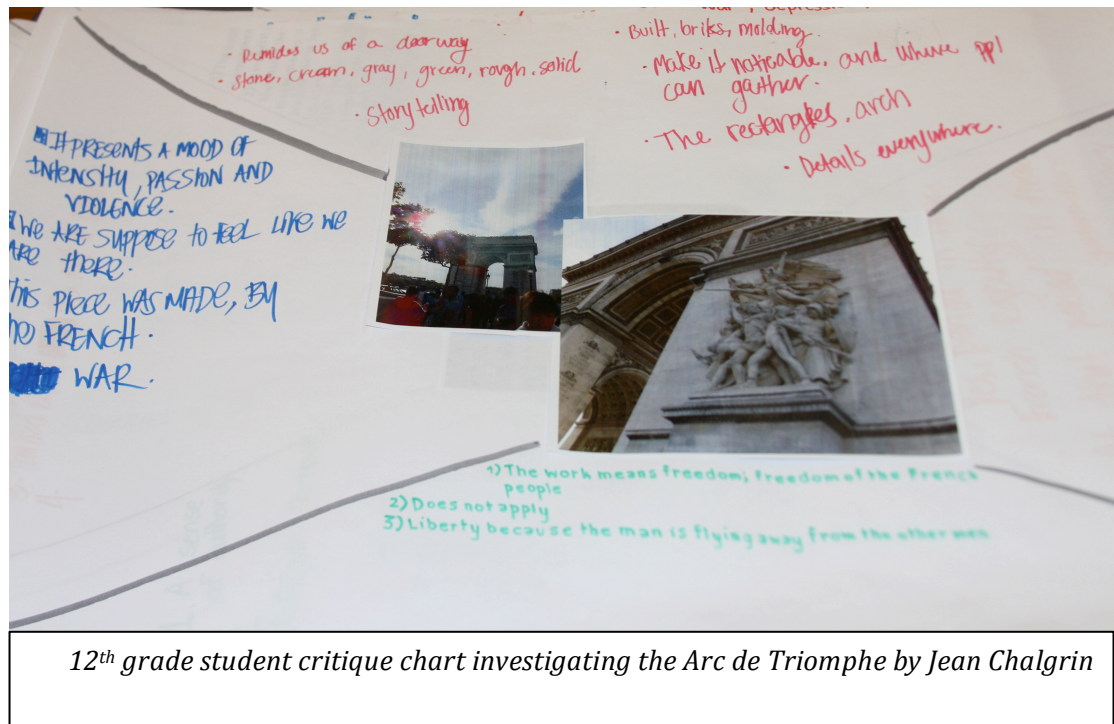


12th grade student critique chart investigating the *Storming of the Bastille* by an unknown artist



12th grade student critique chart investigating the painting *Lady Liberty* by Eugene Delacroix

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After spending 20 minutes closely observing the artwork students were then asked to answer more questions about the French revolution, building on their newly acquired visual history of the period.

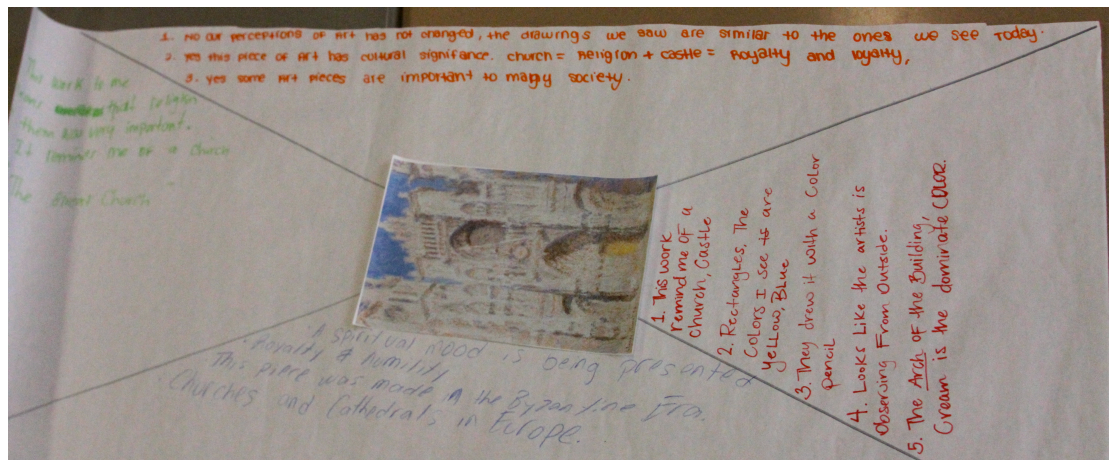
Day 2- *Industrialization, the Road to Impressionism*- The second lesson of the unit was again hearkening back to the students knowledge of Global history but this time focusing on the Industrial Revolution, using the same format as the previous day. It was the goal not to have an in depth study of these periods of history in France but to provide a framework of understanding the historical movements to set the stage for the students on inquiry into the visual history of communities in New York City. Students were asked to make the leap of how notions of industrializations would have affected art production during that time period. The class activity followed the same format as the previous day critiquing art and architecture created during the period of or around the time shortly after

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industrialization in France. The majority of the artworks include the pieces of Impressionist or Post-Impressionists artists. Students were also asked to make comparisons between the Impressionist/Post-Impressionist work and the work discussed on the previous day from the French Revolution.

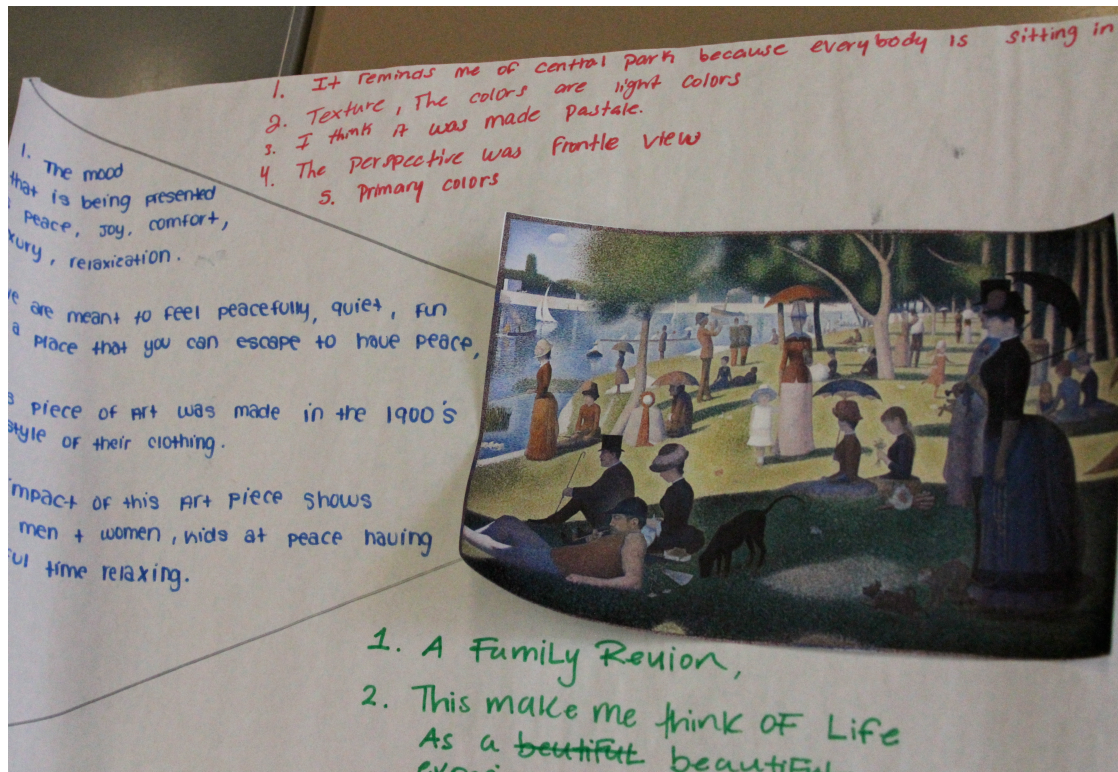


12th grade student critique chart investigating the Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh

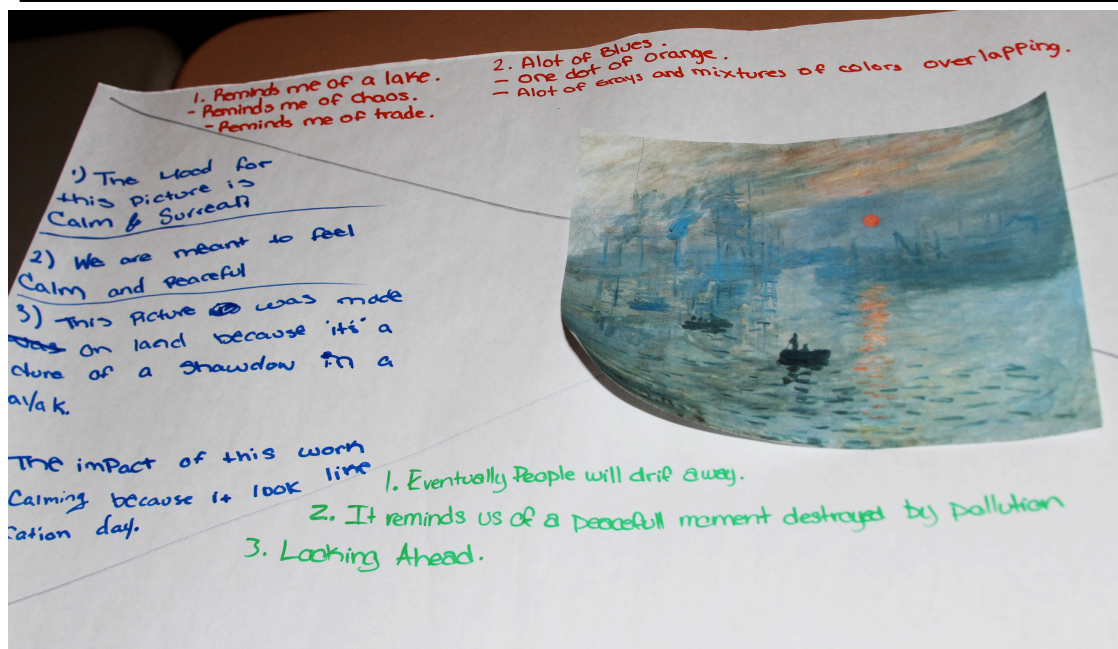


12th grade student critique chart investigating Rouen Cathedral, West Façade, Sunlight by Claude Monet

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12th grade student critique chart investigating An Afternoon on La Grande Jatte by Georges Seurat



12th grade student critique chart investigating Sunrise by Claude Monet

Day 3- *Impressionism, the Other French Revolution*- Students were asked to describe the mood existing in France during industrialization and to explain how it impacted the work of the impressionist artists as well as sketch an image that reminded them of the Impressionist/Post Impressionist work from the day before. The class then watched a section of the film, *The Impressionists: The Other French Revolution* which gave them the most extensive information they had received of the movement thus far. In closure students were asked to evaluate and interpret a quote by Impressionist Camille Pissarro and to then describe what they were excited to observe the following day on our first field trip.

Day 4 –Field trip to local park. After preparing the students with an introduction to different artists techniques of capturing what they see in the moment and reflecting on how works of art reflect the life and times of the location and period in which they were built. We took the students out into our own community to put their newly acquired skills to work. The park we chose to begin our journey at was a 10 minute walk from our school . The park is located in a bustling shopping and residential area of the Bronx. From the park one can see apartment buildings as well as businesses. The students were asked to capture images that demonstrated a juxtaposition of two different materials (which could give insight to the history of the buildings/structures and when/why they were built). The students had oil pastels and their previously cut cardboard “canvases” to capture their images. Students were also encouraged to bring sketchbooks and cameras to record images they would like to work on when we returned to the art studio.

Day 5- Field Trip to the Highline. When my co-teacher and I were brainstorming where to take students in the community to observe evidence of the history of a particular location through the juxtaposition of a variety of materials our first thought was the Highline park in Chelsea. The rich history of the Highline park from a west side railroad track for industry, to an abandoned railroad track, to one of the most unique urban parks ever created (LaFarge, 2012, p. 6) makes it a location ripe for exploration and the creation of works of art. Prior to our visit the students were given an overview of the history of the Highline and its development. Upon arrival students were blown away by the variety of materials and the dynamic design of the park. *Barbara described the Highline, “The buildings we shaped in different ways, some shared the same texture, value, lines” *Alex articulated that, “the plants and the concrete and the train train all go so well together.”

Week 2- Throughout the second week of the unit back in the classroom students were asked to complete the pieces they had begun on our outings. Students were expected to create 6-10 pieces on their cardboards. Once we were back in the classroom we also encouraged students to experiment with a variety of materials we had available to them in the classroom, informing them that they were no longer limited to just oil pastels and cardboard. As the week evolved we encouraged students to think deliberately about the juxtaposition of textures and materials we had asked to them to explore on our outings. Students were encouraged to try and figure out what items they could use in their work to replicate the many different materials we saw on our outings. The use of new materials was introduced as a process of additive or subtractive methods as a challenge to experiment with

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

unusual materials such as nail polish to recreate things that they saw that had a sheen or tearing away pieces of cardboard in specific areas to replicate a particularly rough area.

Sample Lessons

Sample #1

Lesson Title	Our Changing Community – Day 1 - Imaging the French Revolution
Essential Question	Why is art created? How does art inform?
Content Objectives	SWBAT investigate paintings depicting or memorializing the French Revolution SWBAT introduced to the language of art critique in their investigations SWBAT become familiar with the work of the following notable artists: Eugene Delacroix Jean-August- Dominique Ingres Unknown artists who created images of the French Revolution
Language Objectives	Students will use the language of art critique Students will discuss with their group member the works of art they are investigating using the elements of design
Vocabulary	The Elements of Art: Line Shape Direction Size Texture Color Value Revolution The Third Estate Peasants Bougeoisie
Materials	Hand outs – <i>Imaging the French Revolution</i> Color Print out of images Posters with group graphic organizers Crit Cards

	Markers		
Motivation	<table border="1"> <tr> <td> <u>Who</u> was involved in the French Revolution? <u>What</u> happened during the French Revolution? <u>Why</u> did the French Revolution occur? </td><td> <u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of the French Revolution: </td></tr> </table> <p>Identify 3 important <u>themes</u> of the French Revolution: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____</p>	<u>Who</u> was involved in the French Revolution? <u>What</u> happened during the French Revolution? <u>Why</u> did the French Revolution occur?	<u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:
<u>Who</u> was involved in the French Revolution? <u>What</u> happened during the French Revolution? <u>Why</u> did the French Revolution occur?	<u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:		
Procedure	<p><u>Introduction</u> –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review student’s answers to the brainstarter/motivation. Write down on the board a summary of the students answers highlighting the upset of the third estate and how that might be captured in artwork created during the French Revolution on in memorial of the revolution 2. Students will be separated into heterogeneous groups of 3-4. <p><u>Activity:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once students are seated in their groups students will be introduced to the Critique Cards. 2. While explaining Critique Cards each table will get a sets of cards and a large poster to record their findings. 3. Each group will have 3-5 minutes per critique card to respond to the prompt on that particular card. 4. After students have responded to all four critiques with input from their tem members they should respond to the following closure questions. <p><u>Closure:</u></p> <p><u>Summarize</u> the end result of the French Revolution. _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Choose one word to <u>describe</u> how were the people of France felt at the end of the French revolution. _____</p> <p><u>Describe</u> the visual <u>evidence</u> from the images that illustrates this feeling? _____ _____ _____</p>		

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

Content Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of the handout that guided the day's activity 2. Participation in the completion of group graphic organizer
Language Assessment	Students will begin to use the language of art critique. Students will discuss the work they are investigating using elements of art vocabulary.
Standards	<p>Common Core English Language Arts Standards CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2a Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>Common Core History/Social Studies Standards CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p>NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 2: Literacy in Art (exposure to art vocabulary)</p>

Sample #2

Lesson Title	Our Changing Community – Day 2 - Imaging Industrialization
Essential Question	How do innovations change how we live? Why is art created? How does art inform?
Content Objectives	<p>SWBAT investigate paintings of the Impressionists and Post Impressionists</p> <p>SWBAT use the language of art critique in their investigations</p> <p>SWBAT become familiar with the work of the following notable artists:</p> <p>Claude Monet</p> <p>Vincent Van Gough</p> <p>Georges Seurat</p> <p>Henri Toulouse-Lautrec</p> <p>Paul Gauguin</p>

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

Language Objectives	Students will use the language of composition and peer critique Students will discuss how the subjects in their work juxtapose one another		
Vocabulary	<u>The Elements of Art</u> Line Shape Direction Size Texture Color Value <u>The Principles of Design</u> Balance Proportion Rhythm Emphasis Unity Industrialization		
Materials	Hand outs – <i>Imaging Industrialization</i> Color Print out of images Posters with group graphic organizers Crit Cards Markers		
Motivation	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <u>Who</u> was involved in industrialization? <u>What</u> were the results of industrialization? <u>Why</u> did the industrialization occur? </td> <td style="width: 40%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of industrialization: <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 10px;"></div> </td> </tr> </table> <u>Infer</u> , how do you think industrialization effected the technique and subject matter of art? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<u>Who</u> was involved in industrialization? <u>What</u> were the results of industrialization? <u>Why</u> did the industrialization occur?	<u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of industrialization: <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>
<u>Who</u> was involved in industrialization? <u>What</u> were the results of industrialization? <u>Why</u> did the industrialization occur?	<u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of industrialization: <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; margin-top: 10px;"></div>		

Procedure	<p><u>Introduction</u> –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review student’s answers to the brainstarter/motivation. Write down on the board a summary of the students answers highlighting the changing pace of life during and after industrialization and how that might be captured in works of Art. 2. Students will be separated into heterogeneous groups of 3-4. <p><u>Activity:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once students are seated in their groups students will be introduced to the Critique Cards. 2. While explaining Critique Cards each table will get a set of cards and a large poster to record their findings. 3. Each group will have 3-5 minutes per critique card to respond to the prompt on that particular card. 4. After students have responded to all four critiques with input from their team members they should respond to the following closure questions. <p><u>Closure:</u></p> <p><u>Describe</u> the <u>evidence</u> from the image that illustrate changes that were a result of industrialization.</p> <p><u>Compare</u> the impressionist work investigated today to the images of the French Revolution. How were the art techniques <u>similar</u>? How did they differ?</p>
Content Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of the handout that guided the day’s activity 2. Participation in the completion of group graphic organizer
Language Assessment	Students will begin to use the language of art critique. Students will discuss the work they are investigating using elements of art vocabulary.
Standards	<p>Common Core English Language Arts Standards</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2a Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>Common Core History/Social Studies Standards</p>

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

	<p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7</u> Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p>NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 2: Literacy in Art (exposure to art vocabulary)</p>
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Sample #3

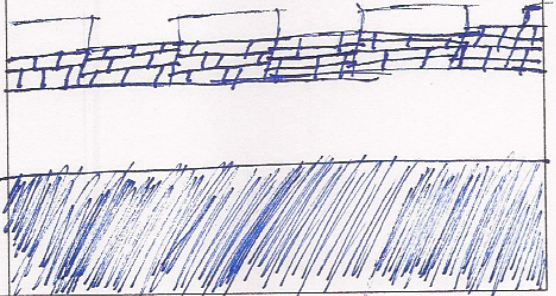
Lesson Title	Our Changing Community – Day 6 – Elaboration and Revision of works of Art
Essential Question	How do innovations change how we live? Why is art created? How does art inform?
Content Objectives	<p>SWBAT investigate their own images that they created on our two field trips</p> <p>SWBAT utilize the language of art critique in their investigations</p> <p>SWBAT experiment with additive and subtractive method in their works of art</p>
Language Objectives	<p>Students will use the language of composition and peer critique.</p> <p>Students will discuss how the subjects in their work juxtapose one another.</p>
Vocabulary	<p>Unity/Variety</p> <p>Balance/Contrast</p> <p>Proportion/Scale</p> <p>Juxtapose</p> <p>Additive/Subtractive methods</p>
Materials	<p>Cardboard</p> <p>Cray-Pas</p> <p>Additive/Subtractive materials</p> <p>Visual references</p>
Motivation	On our field trips describe the visual evidence of change we saw in our communities?
Procedure	Introduction – we will discuss our goal of creating 6-10 works of art that illustrate a juxtaposition. What are some subtractive or additive methods can we experiment with to focus the viewers eye on aspects of our pieces

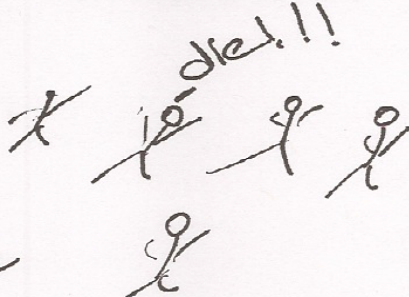
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	<p>Examples of additive and subtractive methods: Additive: nail polish, wire or other materials to mimic materials you saw in our community Subtractive: Tear away the top layer of cardboard to reveal corrugation, make impressions in the cardboard to illustrate texture <u>Technique:</u> Plein Air Drawing with Oil Pastels</p> <p>Crosshatching to Blend Colors Creating Landscape Neutrals by selecting complimentary color to cross hatch with</p> <p>Painting or mixed media</p> <p><u>Design:</u> Composition that effectively illustrates their chosen focus.</p> <p>Closure: Write down what additive or subtractive methods did you use in your work today? Were they successful? Why or why not?</p>
Share	Show your neighbor the piece you have been working on. Make a compliment critique.
Content Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Photos, sketches, drawings from our field trip to a local park and the Highline 2. Completion of 6-10 images from our community
Language Assessment	Students will begin to use the language of composition and peer critique. Students will discuss their work using Elements of Art and Principles of design vocabulary.
Standards	<p>Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards</p> <p>They demonstrate independence. They build strong content knowledge. They comprehend as well as critique. They come to understand other perspectives and cultures.</p> <p>NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 1: Creating Art (through use of different media and techniques) NYC BLUEPRINT IN ART: STANDARD 2: Literacy in Art (exposure to art vocabulary)</p>

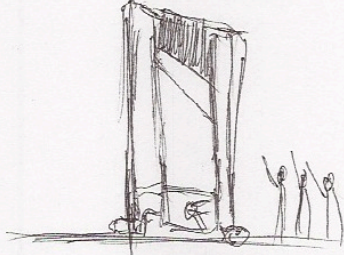
Student Work


On the first day of implementation of the unit, one of the most unexpected hurdles was to have students grasp the fact that for a few days we would not be making artwork but instead investigating the work of others. While looking at the students work it was exciting to see how much the students remembered from studying the French Revolution which at this point would have been two years prior. Many students chose great images to sketch, which illustrated a great understanding of the major point of the revolution.

<p>Who was involved in the French Revolution? <i>Louis 13th and the French</i></p> <p>What happened during the French Revolution? <i>Rebellion</i></p> <p>Why did the French Revolution occur? <i>The third states were being mistreated mistreated.</i></p>	<p>Sketch an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:</p> 
<p>Identify 3 important themes of the French Revolution: 1. <i>monarchy</i> 2. <i>rebellion</i> 3. <i>Reign of terror</i></p>	
<p>12th grade student *Jason</p>	

<p>Who was involved in the French Revolution? <i>The french Napoleon</i></p> <p>What happened during the French Revolution? <i>france was in debt</i></p> <p>Why did the French Revolution occur? <i>but the 14th and many aristocrats</i></p>	<p>Sketch an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:</p> 
<p>Identify 3 important themes of the French Revolution: 1. <i>galton</i> 2. <i>Napoleon</i> 3. <i>war</i></p>	
<p>12th grade student *Harry</p>	

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

<p>Who was involved in the French Revolution? Louis XVI, Robespierre Antoine Boucher</p> <p>What happened during the French Revolution? Enlightenment Era influenced</p> <p>Why did the French Revolution occur? Monarchy was treating the people like shit.</p>	<p>Sketch an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:</p> 
<p>Identify 3 important themes of the French Revolution: 1. <u>Freedom</u> 2. <u>Revolution</u> 3. <u>Corruption</u></p>	
<p>12th grade student *Alex</p>	

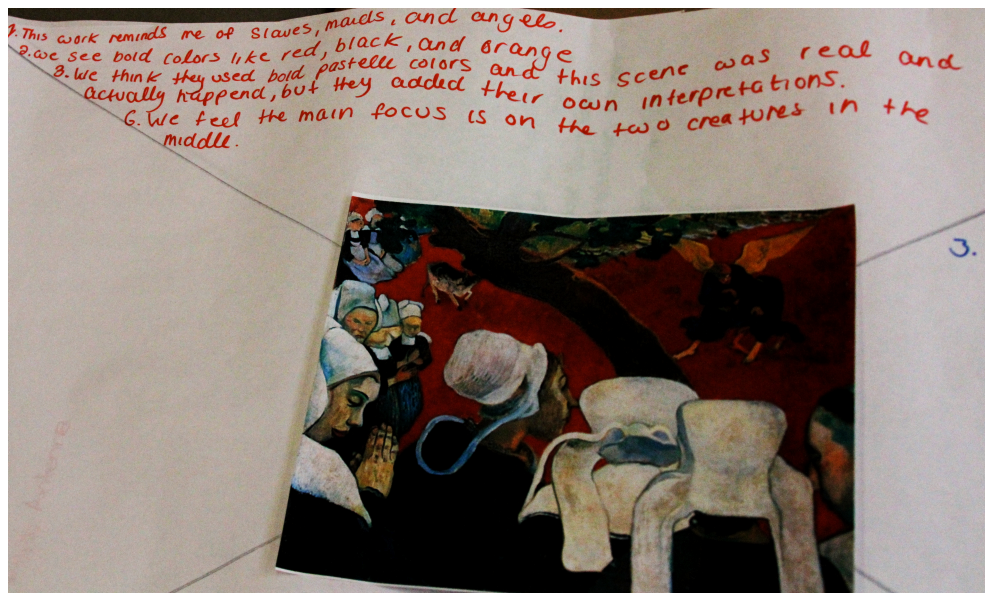
<p>Who was involved in the French Revolution? The bourgeoisie, Maximilien Robespierre, King Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette.</p> <p>What happened during the French Revolution? Monarchy Regime declines Enlightenment ideas.</p> <p>Why did the French Revolution occur? Monarchy was treating the every day people like bad.</p>	<p>Sketch an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:</p> 
<p>Identify 3 important themes of the French Revolution: 1. <u>Revolution</u> 2. <u>Corruption</u> 3. <u>Freedom</u></p>	
<p>12th grade student *Eric</p>	

I found it successful to include very basic Level 1 questions that jogged the students memory about what they remembered about the time period. The student response was positive in that students were able to sketch as well as just write bullet points about their thoughts rather than the pressure to write complete sentences, this was particularly effective for one of my students with an IEP because

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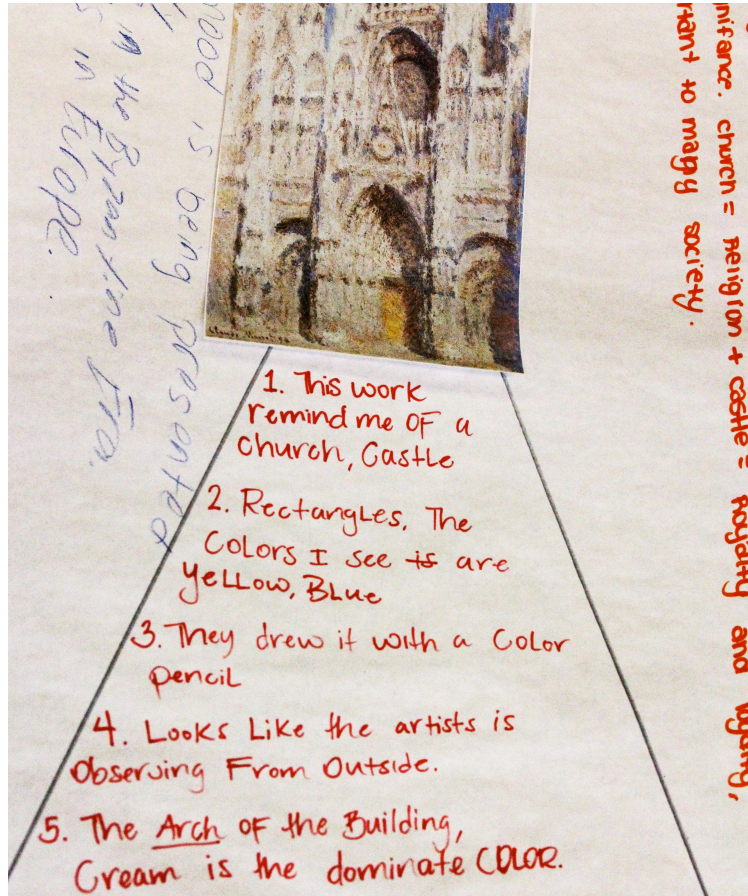
there were multiple entry points for her to share her knowledge of the subject (*Mary) While she did not feel comfortable drawing any images she was able to demonstrate some memory of the French Revolution by brainstorming major themes from the time period.

Students were next asked to investigate images of works of art there were created at the time or in remembrance of the French Revolution. In groups of 4 using their Crit Cards students recorded their information on large poster paper and the images were rotated among the groups. The Crit cards allowed for a deliberate format for investigation of the images and encouraged the students to make their own meaning based on the visual evidence that they saw in combination with their prior knowledge. I was overwhelmed by the powerful understanding students gathered of the images as they explored them, many students really identified the emotion of the works of art and how it connected to the dramatic events of the period.

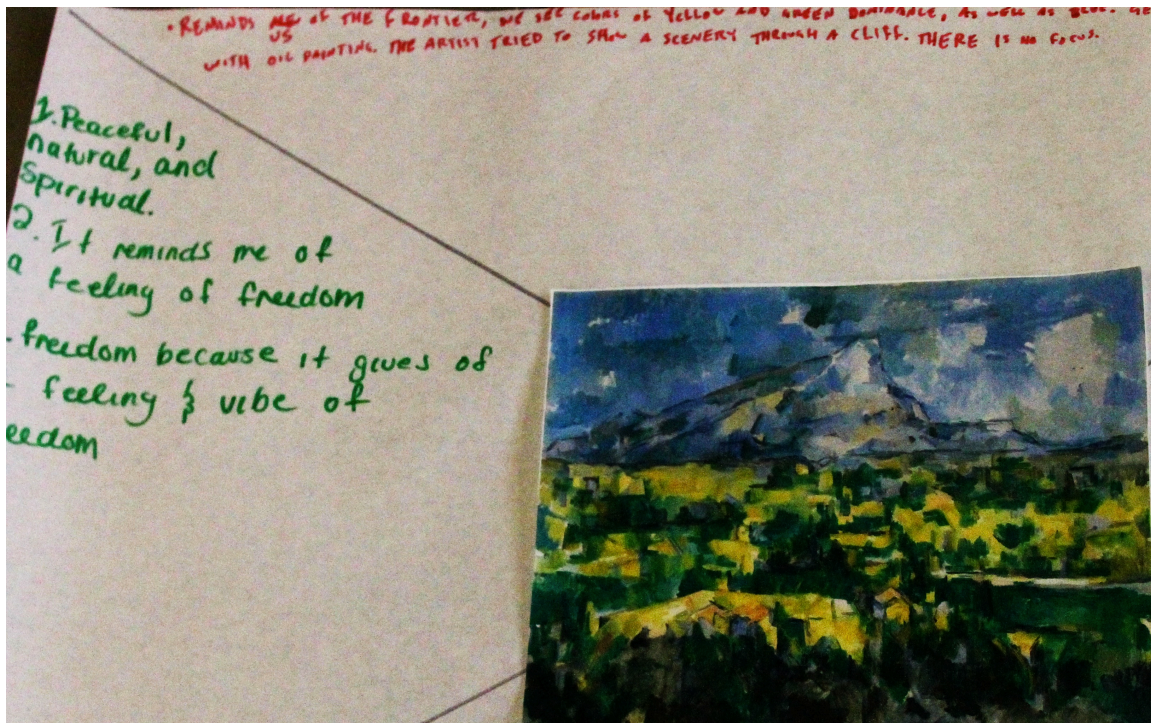


12th grade student critique chart investigating Vision After the Sermon, by Paul Gauguin

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM



12th grade student critique chart investigating Rouen Cathedral, West Façade, Sunlight by Claude Monet



12th grade student critique chart investigating Mont Saint-Victoire by Paul Cezanne

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

The closure for this activity asked students to reflect on the visual evidence they had gathered from the images and connect the images to their prior knowledge. Again offering multiple entry points for understanding from describing the feeling of the people of France at the end of the French Revolution to describing more in depth the visual evidence that illustrated such a feeling. I found it was incredible how much detail the students remembered from the images even though they only saw each image for a few minutes. Their descriptions of the how the images showed the feelings of the French displayed an understanding of the Revolution and the works of art.

CLOSURE (5 min)

Summarize the end result of the French Revolution. The ending result is that they killed the king

Choose one word to describe how were the people of France felt at the end of the French revolution. angry

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrates this feeling?

There was always a group of people crowding around someone and they were carrying a head on a stick

12th grade student *Casey

CLOSURE (5 min)

Summarize the end result of the French Revolution. The king was killed monarchy / royalty died and democracy was introduced to France.

Choose one word to describe how were the people of France felt at the end of the French revolution. joyful

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrates this feeling?

The evidence of the images from the French Revolution shows war, angry, death, isolation, and depression etc.

12th grade student *Barbara

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

CLOSURE (5 min)

Summarize the end result of the French Revolution. King Louis was killed, democracy

Choose one word to **describe** how were the people of France felt at the end of the French revolution. Free

Describe the visual **evidence** from the images that illustrates this feeling?

woman holding the French flag above the fighting

12th grade student *Tracy

The second day of the unit we focused on investigating images that were heavily influenced by industrialization. The majority of the works of art the students investigated included the work of Impressionist or Post-Impressionist artists. The students were much more comfortable with the process of looking at the work as I used the same format I had used on day one. Using the same graphic organizers and the Crit Cards the students felt more familiar with the process and eager to share their knowledge. The students also had a lot of knowledge to share in what their remembered about industrialization and the impact it had on the society. Students were asked to shift their thinking before investigating the works of art to think about how all of the changes that happened as a result of industrialization might impact the art that was created at this time period, students answers to this questions tended to be very vague.

Infer, how do you think industrialization effected the technique and subject matter of art?

Industrialization made art more serious.

12th grade student, *Harry

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

Infer, how do you think industrialization effected the technique and subject matter of art?

It effect by the motion showing in the subject of the Art.

12th grade student, *Natalie

Students had a challenging time answering how the art may change based on the time period, this was very exciting because investigating how changes in society impact the art that is created was one of my main foci of investigation in this unit. I wanted the students to learn from observing their own communities how we can understand the history of a location in many ways by observing the materials and process used in its construction.

Once the students began investigating the images they began to develop an understanding of the connection between industrialization and the works of art that were being created. Multiple students commented on the inclusion of what looked like polluted air in Monet's paintings, what they inferred were a result of the increase in railroads and factories. Finally students were asked to compare what they had learned about art reflecting industrialization with the art in memory of the French Revolution. Many students had great insights into the differences and similarities between to two citing the notions that in some ways the works were similar but that the Impressionist and Post Impressionist work was more interested in capturing the idea of that exact time.

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrate changes that were a result of industrialization.

Art became much less complex, architecture grew to new heights.

[Art became much less complex, architecture reached new heights.]

Compare the impressionist work investigated today to the images of the French Revolution. How were art techniques similar? How did they differ?

There was many influences on each art, but they all were meant to express an idea of that time.

[There was many influences on each art, but they all were meant to express and idea of that time]

12th grade student, *Eric

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrate changes that were a result of industrialization.

Art became much less complex, architecture grew to new heights.

Compare the impressionist work investigated today to the images of the French Revolution. How were art techniques similar? How did they differ?

They were pretty much the same, but the techniques were very different
[They were pretty much the same, but their techniques were very different]

12th grade student, *Alex

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrate changes that were a result of industrialization.

The skies were more fluid and represented the ways of life

Compare the impressionist work investigated today to the images of the French Revolution. How were art techniques similar? How did they differ?

The French works looked more ambitious and the industrialist works showed how life was more

12th grade student, *Greg

The third day of the unit was the first time where students were given any concrete knowledge of the artist's work we would be trying to capture on our field trip (Impressionists and Post-Impressionists). Initially students were asked to reflect on the work from the day before, discussing what the feelings of the period were and how they were illustrated in the works of art. After watching the video, students were asked to interpret a quote by Impressionist artist Camille Pissarro,

"Work at the same time on sky, water, branches, ground, keeping everything going on an equal basis...Don't be afraid of putting on colour...Paint generously and unhesitatingly, for it is best not to lose the first impression."

I chose this quote for students to respond to because it gets right at the heart of what I wanted the students to be taking in as we went out to make art in our own community, capture everything, observe, notice the details we often overlook, notice the colors, shapes, and materials. For many students this quote was

well understood, they were able to capture the purpose of the works of art created by the Impressionists.

Interpret this quote. Evaluate what this quote tells us about the concerns of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art movement.

Being less perfect

*12th grade student, *Tracy*

Interpret this quote. Evaluate what this quote tells us about the concerns of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art movement.

Be Free with drawing life and everyday things. The first impression is always the best.

*12th grade student, *Ronnie*

Interpret this quote. Evaluate what this quote tells us about the concerns of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art movement.

It means color what you feel. Don't hesitate b/c the ones that are straight forward are the ones that are the best.

*12th grade student, *Greg*

In the field

Our first day out in the field drawing we walked to a local park, the students took a while to adjust to the idea of drawing outside. However, once they warmed up to the idea the students didn't want to leave. The students were really taking our conversations about careful observation and attention to detail very seriously. Students gravitated towards different areas of the park some of them more focused on the tree and plants in the park and some more interested in the building outside of the park. It is not often that students in school are given such free range to study what they are interested in doing and I believe it was empowering to the students to make selections of what to study all on their own. It was exciting to see the variation in the work that they created.

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM



12th grade student work in the local park



CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM



12th graders investigating materials in the local park



CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM



12th grade students sketching work in our local park



Their works of art represent choice making, experimentation and deep thought about how to express the way that they observed the world around them.

For our second field trip we took the students to a dramatically different environment, the Highline Park on the west side of Manhattan in New York City. While the goal was to explore some of the same ideas we had observed in our schools local park the Highline provided for a vastly different experience for our students. Armed with their cameras and their sketching materials the students immediately took to the unique environment created by The Highline. When students were asked to inquire what how the design of the park reflected the history of the space they immediately were able to pinpoint the visual evidence they saw around them and connect it to the railroad/ transportation history of the area. Not only does the Highline Boast a rich history of industry but also a unique history of artists, this Highline was also a teaching opportunity to expose my students the vast array of purposes work of art can have. In *On the High Line: Exploring America's Most Original Urban Park* Annik LaFarge credits the driving force behind the creation of the Highline to the photographer Joel Sternfeld, whose stunning photographs of the railroad helped to secure funding and support for the creation of the park (LaFarge, 2012, p. 66). The roots of artistry run deep at the Highline and throughout our visit not only were students engaged in inquiry about the physical space of the part their was live art everywhere, students witnessed an individual doing some experimental performance art and sat down and did made paintings with a local artists who asks people visiting the highline to come and paint with him.

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12th grade students investigating the Highline



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12th grade collecting visual evidence



Students gained knowledge of a new environment as well as the vocabulary to articulate their varied experiences through conversation with fellow classmates and teachers. Students were intrigued by the variety of materials and perspectives that the Highline offers from plants growing in through railroad tracks to glass planes that suggest a stage of the city.

Upon return to our classroom students were asked to compare their experiences at our local park with their time at the Highline, the students had unique thoughts on the comparisons of the two. Student *Ben stated that the Highline had, “ Beautiful scenery, a different ambiance, artwork in our surroundings, interesting, new and vivid. “ In comparison to our local park which was described by Ben as, “old, familiar, calm, playgrounds, not too inspiring, fun, and colorful.” What stands out about Ben’s comments is his careful attention to detail and description of the two locations. One of the goals for this unit was for students to become more aware of the environments we interact with and it is clear from Ben’s reflection that he has developed a keen eye for observation. Ben’s response was characteristic of the reflections students had from our outing.

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Sample of Final Student Works of Art



**Brian*



**Alex*

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**Ronnie*



**Dan*



**Laura*



**Nick*

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**Eric*



**Tracy*

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

What now?

“From imagination to social responsibility, the arts teach our children about what it is to be human and enable them to experience their humanity in thought and in action. When doubters say we haven’t the time or money or space for the arts, we must ask what they think will happen to our schools without the arts. Surely none of us wants to deny our children the opportunity to experience their individual and shared humanity as the arts in education uniquely allow.

Jessica Hoffman Davis p. 78, (2008)

The arts have a way of reaching a multitude of different learners and teaching students the life lessons that are necessary for them to succeed inside and outside of the classroom walls. The Common Core College and Career Readiness standards offer the opportunity for schools to make the argument that regular arts education during the school day is not an option, it is a necessity. Units like *Our Changing Community* provide students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in the act of synthesizing multiple experiences in the arts classroom. As Davis cites, even with the plethora of evidence to support the positive effects of arts education to students in the classroom, she describes students in the South Bronx who had a dance instructor come to teach ballet twice a week in a successful effort to improve students reading scores (Hoffman Davis, 2008, p.46-47), the arts are still not a consistent part of students day to day education. The Common Core standards have the power to necessitate the implementation for Arts courses in all school no matter what the socioeconomic level of the student body.

So the question remains, what now? What is the next step towards advancing sustainable universal access to quality Arts education? The second largest school district in the United states (“100 Largest School Districts,” 2012) has already begun the path towards implementing strong Arts Education reform with the goal of

ensuring that all students regardless of their socioeconomic background. In October 2009 the Los Angeles Unified School Board voted to have the arts defined as a core subject in the school districts curriculum. This achievement in recognizing the Arts as a core subject will prevent the arts from falling victim to the extensive budget cuts that have been experienced in the last decade (“LAUSD Elevates Arts,” 2012). If the nation can take a cue from Los Angeles and rally around the importance of the arts soon other districts will not fall victim to the same budget cuts as Los Angeles has been battling. The creation of Common Core Standards for the arts would work hand in hand with the reintroduction for support for arts education.

Already there are arts education organizations looking to provide resources on developing Common Core Standards for the Arts. *Education Week* held a webinar In February of 2013 addressing how the Common Core can utilize the Arts in achieving the goals of the Common Core State standards (“Common Core and the Arts,” 2013). The webinar lays out a multitude of ways in which the arts can be incorporated into a variety of units spanning many grade levels, courses and topics. The president of the College Board and Common Core State Standards Architect David Coleman is quoted in the webinar stating, “The great news is that the standards call on so many things the arts do well. The tradition of careful observation, attention to evidence and artist’ choices, the love of taking an artist’s work seriously lies at the heart of these standards” (“Common Core and the Arts,” 2013). Colman’s point is only the beginning of how the Arts can be utilized to raise the educational bar for all students across the United States.

Additional Materials and Worksheets

Imaging the French Revolution

BRAINSTARTER (5min)

<p><u>Who</u> was involved in the French Revolution?</p> <p><u>What</u> happened during the French Revolution?</p> <p><u>Why</u> did the French Revolution occur?</p>	<p><u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of the French Revolution:</p>
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Identify 3 important themes of the French Revolution:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

CLOSURE (5min)

Summarize the end result of the French Revolution.

Choose one word to describe how the people of France felt at the end of the French Revolution. _____

Describe the visual evidence from the images that illustrates this feeling.

Impressionism – The *Other* French Revolution

BRAINSTARTER (5min)

<p>Describe the mood existing in France during industrialization.</p> <p><u>Explain</u> how industrialization impacted the work we investigated yesterday?</p>	<p><u>Sketch</u> an image that reminds you of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist work we looked at yesterday:</p>
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CLOSURE (5min)

Impressionist artist Camille Pissarro once said,

“Work at the same time on the sky, water, branches, ground, keeping everything going on an equal basis...Don’t be afraid of putting on colour...Paint generously and unhesitatingly, for it is best not to lose the first impression.”

Interpret this quote. Evaluate what this quote tells us about the concerns of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art movement.

What are you excited to observe tomorrow? Describe the subjects/colors/textures you hope to include in your work.

Reflections from the field – Changes in *our* communities

Describe what it was like to go out into the community to draw.

How did this **perspective** differ from drawing inside an art studio?

Compare your experience drawing in the park new our school to your experience at the Highline. **Identify characteristics** that stood out to you in the two separate environments.

The Highline	Arthur Ave
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Define a few design ideas you gained from our research that your plan to incorporate into your work.

Cite an example of a juxtaposition (contrast/comparison) of two things you observed on one of our field trips. Examples; variety in architecture, or buildings, or nature vs. man made materials. What insight did it offer you about the community?

Our Changing Community Mid Unit Self Reflection

Review the work you have completed thus far. Rate your current progress on this project.

TASK: Create 6-10 landscapes which illustrate our changing community. Use additive and subtractive methods to demonstrate the investigation of juxtaposition.

CURRENT PROGRESS (*circle one*):

Poor

Weak

Moderate

Excellent

Good

Strong

One thing I would like develop in my series is:

List two different elements that are juxtaposed in your landscapes:

<i>EX: Lush nature of the highline</i>	<i>Industrial metal railroad tracks</i>

List below the additive and subtractive methods you have experimented with and what you were trying to illustrate by using those methods.

<i>Additive Methods</i>	<i>Subtractive Methods</i>
<i>In order to show:</i>	<i>In order to show:</i>

GOAL: Today I plan to...

Our Changing Community
End of Unit Reflection

List the choices you made in your artwork in the following categories:
What materials did you use?

Additive methods

-
-

Subtractive Methods

-
-

How did you **decide** what to include and leave out of your compositions?

Name the **skills** you learned that aided you in completing your finished works.

-
-

-
-

What was the overall **goal** of this project? What were you aiming to **accomplish**?

Do you think your final artworks achieved the goal? What **evidence** in your works shows your achievement of that goal?

Describe how you used our firsthand **observations** from our trips to inform the choices you made in your art works.

How do you feel your finished work **reflect** our community? In the Bronx? New York City?

If you had to do this project again what would you do differently?

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CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

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CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

The Bank Street
College of Education

Graduate School of Education



November 16, 2012

Kathleen Kennedy,

Dear Kathleen,

Your proposal and consent letters and forms for working with human participants for your Independent Study have been approved. You may commence your work with human participants. If you make any significant changes to your work with human participants, you need to inform the IMP Committee in writing of your plans. Please place a copy of this letter along with unsigned copies of any consent letters and forms in a Permissions section at the end of your appendix. Keep the original signed forms in a safe place for five years.

The best of luck with your study. We look forward to having the completed copy in the Bank Street College Library.

Sincerely,

Nina Jensen

Nina Jensen, Chair
Integrative Master's Project Committee

CURRICULUM DESIGN IN THE URBAN ARTS CLASSROOM

The Bank Street
College of Education

Graduate School of Education



Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Kathleen Kennedy and I am your student's Studio Art teacher. I am also a graduate student at the Bank Street Graduate School of Education, completing my Master's degree in Leadership in Technology and the Arts. As a part of my graduate work I am writing an independent study as a requirement for my degree and a culmination of my studies. For my project, I have chosen to examine the efficacy of newly implemented National Common Core Standards in the Arts classroom.

In order to examine these new standards, I will be closely analyzing student progress in our unit, "Our Changing Community". I will be asking students to document their own process and that of their peers through written classroom reflections and surveys. I may also record classroom discussions through video and audio recordings as well as photographs. Together, these will serve as primary data for my study. Every individual will receive a pseudonym. The school and the classroom will also be given pseudonyms. Video and audio recordings will be used here as well.

From my research I am hoping to gather evidence that demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of the Common Core Standards within the Arts classroom. Your student's work will contribute a great deal to my project.

In order to use the written and video or audio documentation, I need your permission. Please fill out the attached Consent Form and return it to me by Wednesday November 21, 2012.

The study that results from this project will be shared as a PDF with the Bank Street community in a password-protected searchable database. It may also be submitted as a PDF to the Bank Street Library where it would be catalogued as part of the Library collection and entered into an international database for wider circulation. The material may also be included in professional presentations and publications.

If you have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Kennedy

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Consent and Release Form for Parent or Guardian

I am the parent/guardian of _____

I have carefully read the information provided above and give my permission to Kathleen Kennedy to use (check all that you are consenting to):

- _____ Written Documentation of my child
- _____ Video Documentation of my child
- _____ Audio Documentation of my child
- _____ Photo Documentation of my child

I understand that my child's name and the name of the school and community will be protected by pseudonyms in the actual thesis as well as any professional talks and publications based on this research. I grant permission to Kathleen Kennedy to use the above noted documentation of my child in the thesis document and in professional presentations and publications.

I have read this release form and agree to its terms knowingly and voluntarily.

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____